

DESCRIPTIONS OF TWO NEW CUSCUSES (*PHALANGER*).

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I OWE to the kindness of Mr. Walter Rothschild the opportunity of examining three examples of the genus *Phalanger* lately received by him. One of these is a *Ph. maculatus* from Waigin, the second is too young for determination, while the third, collected by Mr. W. Doherty in the Obi group of islands, represents a very distinct new species allied to the *Ph. ornatus* Gray from Gilolo (Halmahera). At the same time I take the opportunity of describing a new form of the *Ph. orientalis* group found by Mr. A. S. Meek on the island of St. Aignan's, Louisiade Archipelago.

The first of the two new species I propose to name in honour of Mr. Rothschild, to whom is due not only its discovery, but also that of the interesting Talaut Cuscus (*Phalanger melanotis*) described in a previous part.*

1. *Phalanger rothschildi* sp. nov.

Most nearly allied to *Ph. ornatus*. Size comparatively small. Fur soft and close. General colour uniform dark golden fulvous, not dissimilar to that on the shoulders of a Morty Island male of *Ph. ornatus*, though not so bright as in the male typical of that species; no white spotting on the body. Dorsal black line distinct on crown, more or less obsolete on nape, reappearing on withers, and disappearing on posterior back. Ears well haired externally, a spot at their outer bases dull yellow; their inner surface thinly haired marginally. Under surface from chin to anus, and inner sides of limbs, pure sharply defined white, the hairs white to their bases. Outer sides of limbs and furry basal portion of tail coloured like back, but rather paler; the middle line of the tail below whitish.

Skull closely similar to that of *Ph. ornatus* in all essential characters, but very markedly smaller. Teeth also quite the same as in that species, the canine similarly touching i^3 at its base and separated from it terminally. Middle premolar present on each side, though very small: lower intermediate teeth three.

Approximate dimensions of the type, a fully adult male, measured in skin:—

Head and body 370 mm.: tail 310.

Skull: distance from hinder end of temporal fossa to gnathion 51 (as compared to 59 in the type of *Ph. ornatus*); greatest breadth 44·6; nasals, length 27·5, greatest breadth 9·3; interorbital breadth 8·7; palate, length 36·6; oblique horizontal length of last upper premolar 5; combined length of ms^{1-3} 12·8.

Hab. Loiwnj, Great Obi, Moluccas. Coll. W. Doherty.

Type: stuffed in the Tring Museum; skull presented by Mr. Rothschild to the British Museum.

“Killed September 1897. Iris pale sepia: claws brownish white: naked part of tail pale brown.”—W. D.

This striking little Cuscus may be readily distinguished from *Ph. ornatus* and *Ph. lullulæ* by its uniform unspotted fur, its white belly, and small size.

* Nov. Zool. V. p. 2, 1898.

The second Cusens may be named in honour of its collector, to whom science is already indebted for the discovery of no less than three other members of the genus, *Phalanger tullulæ*, *Ph. orientalis intercastellanus*, and *Ph. o. kiriwinæ*.

2. *Phalanger orientalis meeki* subsp. nov.

Male pale brownish, almost exactly as in subsp. *intercastellanus*, therefore quite different from the silvery grey, getting white in old age, of subsp. *kiriwinæ*. The longer hairs are whitish for their basal, black for their terminal halves. The woolly fur is dull whitish basally, gradually becoming more brownish terminally. Dorsal line present, but, owing to the general brownish colour of the back, not conspicuous. Face greyer. Sides of neck and shoulders more or less suffused with darker brown, evidently of glandular origin. Under surface dull greyish brown, not sharply defined; a narrow central white line on the chest. Limbs and furry part of tail coloured like back.

Female dark wavy cinereous grey, very much as in many New Guinea specimens; much darker than in *kiriwinæ*. Belly dull greyish, paler and less brown than in the *male*, but also without conspicuous colour contrasts.

Skull still smaller than in *intercastellanus* and *kiriwinæ*, therefore far smaller than in *typicus*, and approaching in size that of *breviceps*. Interorbital region narrow, its ridges nearly or quite parallel, not projecting as postorbital processes and but little overhanging the temporal fossae. The most projecting point is scarcely anterior to the front edge of the brain-case, as in *breviceps*, while in the other forms it overhangs the fossae quite clear of the brain-case. Middle upper premolar not present in any of the specimens examined. Lower intermediate teeth generally three, in one case two.

Skull-dimensions * of the type, an old *male* :—

Extreme length 82, basal length † 74, greatest breadth 52·7; nasals, length 32, greatest breadth 11·5, least breadth 5·4; interorbital breadth 9·3; tip to tip of rudimentary postorbital processes 9·5; intertemporal breadth 7·1; palate, length 45; horizontal oblique diameter of last upper premolar 3·9; length of ms^{1-3} 14·6.

Hab. St. Aignan's Island, Louisiade Archipelago.

Type: Brit. Mus., No. 98.4.1.5. Collected by Albert S. Meek.

Of this local subspecies Mr. Meek sent home nearly a dozen examples, four of them being retained for the British Museum collection, and others are in the Tring Museum.

Ph. o. meeki is no doubt, as is natural, most nearly allied to *Ph. o. kiriwinæ* and *intercastellanus*, but differs from the first by its colour, from the second by the different structure of its interorbital region, and from both by its smaller size.

* The typical skin is so contracted as not to be worth measuring, but the following are the dimensions of another *male*, taken from a skin made up after being sent in spirit :—head and body 415; tail 297; hind-foot 59; ear 18.

† Basal length of three other specimens :—♂ 73·6, 71·2, ♀ 71·5.